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The Local  
Experience Curator



## A GUIDE TO SOLO WOMAN TRAVEL IN SOUTH AMERICA

With insider tips from our leading  
woman travel designers at Kuoda

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# The Ultimate Guide to Solo Woman Travel in South America

We're in the midst of an era where women are more empowered than ever before. One of the most visible ways in which this has manifested is the swelling number of women engaging in solo female travel.

While we believe that travel of any kind is an opportunity to enrich your mind and nourish your soul, traveling on your own carries benefits above and beyond that. As a woman, though, these experiences can be especially profound. It builds independence, confidence, and courage that embeds itself in your own personal history and permeates all areas of your life upon return.

With all of its ups, female solo travel also has its fair share of challenges. Although these challenges can act as a catalyst for true adventure and the further development of invaluable life skills, they're also something you should be prepared for. If your destination of choice is South America, that's what we're here for!

Before setting out on your transformative trip as an independent and empowered female, have a read through this guide. We're talking safety, comfort, packing, the top destinations for solo female travel in the South American continent, and a whole lot more.





# Insider Tips for Woman Solo Travel

When you travel alone, you make the rules. That means you choose your itinerary, how long you stay, and just how adventurous you want to be in those plans. In order to do that safely and comfortably, though, a little pre-planning and research are required. Below we'll discuss all the insider tips you'll ever need to know for the best female solo travel experience in South America.

## Learn the Language

Traveling in South America is not like traveling in Europe or Asia. You'll be hard-pressed to find English-speaking people here.

While you might find English-speaking locals in major cities like Lima or Buenos Aires, there aren't many communities outside of these places where you'll be able to communicate in your native tongue. And if part of your solo travel goal is to immerse in local cultures, you'll definitely want to make your way to some of these less-traveled outposts (because they're often where the hidden gems and opportunities for slow travel are).



Of course, you'll never be completely unable to communicate when you travel with a tour company like Kuoda. Our guides are fluent in English and Spanish and can help you with purchases, ordering food, and asking any questions you might have. But [if you want to be able to hold a bit of a conversation and engage with locals on a deeper level, it doesn't hurt to have some basic Spanish in your vocabulary.](#)

Consider using a phrasebook to help you with common, useful phrases for getting around. Basic salutations as well as phrases for making purchases, ordering food, or asking for directions will serve you well. Write them out using phonetic spelling to help you pronounce them as well as correctly so that a local can read them if need be.

When you need to say or understand something outside of these common phrases, there are very useful applications that can help you do that. [Google Translate](#) allows you to write or speak what you need to be translated, and you can download languages so that you don't need phone service or Wi-Fi to use it.

[You might also download an app to help you learn the language before you leave or while you have downtime on your trip.](#) [Duolingo](#) is among our favorites. This app allows you to choose lessons between 5 and 20 minutes per day, and you'd be amazed how much you can learn with such little time invested.

Above all, don't be shy! Locals appreciate it when you simply try to use the language, and many will try their best to help you out when and if they can.

## Pack for Your Needs

The most important consideration when packing for female solo travel is where you're going to be visiting. South America is nearly 7 million square miles large, stretching from just above the equator almost all the way down to Antarctica. It's home to desert, jungle, mountains, beaches, and everything in between – and that means that the climate can change drastically within and between countries and their best destinations.

After you've planned your itinerary and you know where you're going, make sure to pack accordingly. If you're going to Machu Picchu, you'll be in the Peruvian Andes and you're going to need warm clothes. If you're going to the beaches along the Colombian coast, summer dresses will do you well. Keep in mind that each destination has seasons, too, so you should be aware of the difference in temperatures and climate conditions at various parts of the year.

When packing, you should also consider the activities in your itinerary. Are you hiking in and around Patagonia? You're going to need a good pair of hiking boots and a warm coat and hat. Do you want to explore the depths of the Amazon jungle in Bolivia? Don't forget your mosquito repellent!

Packing correctly means only bringing what you need for the weather and activities you'll be doing. We always recommend packing as lightly as possible, remembering to leave plenty of room in your suitcase for souvenirs (like warm alpaca sweaters, handmade tapestries, and a bottle of authentic Argentinian wine).



## Stay Connected

While you're on your solo female trip, experiencing all the culture, history, and nature South America offers you, we highly recommend disconnecting from the outside world. This is your opportunity to truly immerse in the places you'll be traveling to, and it's difficult to do that when you're constantly having to check e-mails or stay connected to social media.

Many of our destinations will take you far off the beaten path, where there's no connection to WiFi or phone service. Take this chance to detach from the demands of your daily life, let go, and be alone with yourself and with these potentially life-changing experiences.

With that said, though, we do understand the need for feeling both comfortable and safe while you travel to unknown lands. For that reason, Kuoda remains in contact with all of our guests throughout the trip. Whatever your need might be, you're able to get ahold of us 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.



## Stay Safe

South America is a lot safer for solo females than you might have heard. But traveling anywhere outside of the home country you know inside and out carries with it some degree of risk. These tips will help you navigate safely in any country you visit:

- [Always book tours with reliable and reputable companies.](#) Check reviews to get an inside look at any company you book with.

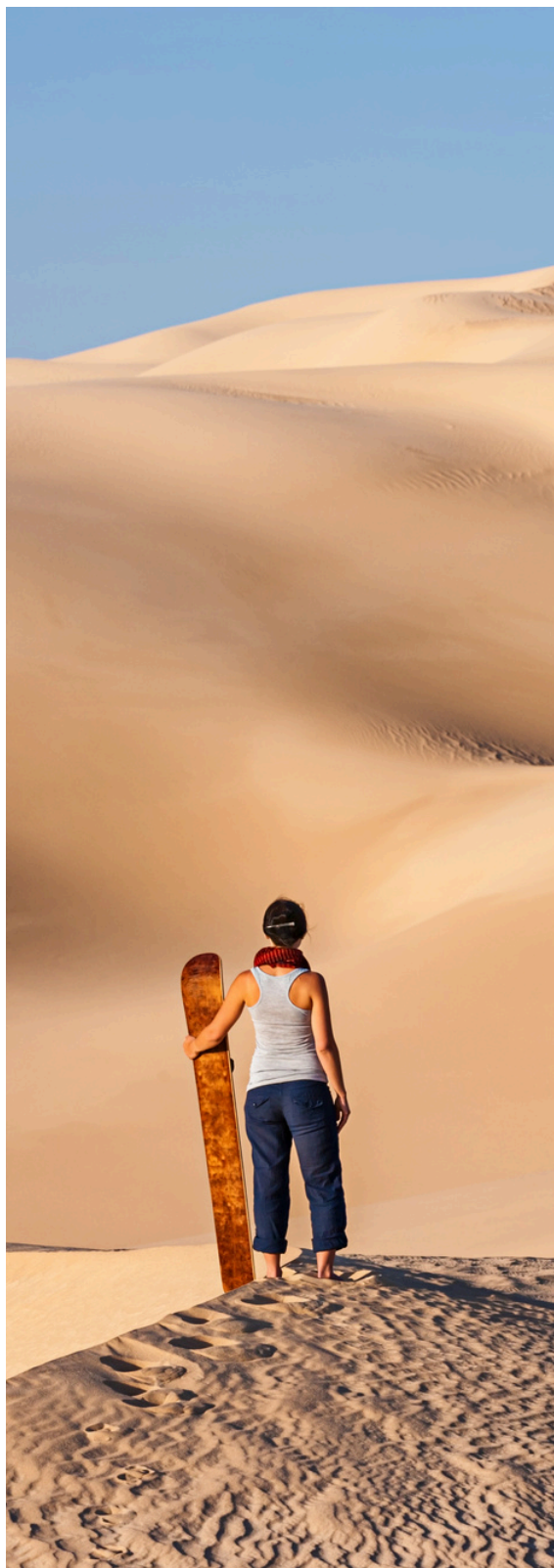


- **Make sure the tour company that you use to plan your itinerary and book tours offers pick-up and drop-off service from the airport and between destinations.** This way, you're always connected to the company you've booked with and can be sure you get to your destination quickly and safely.
- **Book with a company that provides you with a guide or a driver who will be with you while you travel in and between destinations.** These guides and drivers should speak both Spanish and English and be knowledgeable in terms of local customs and culture. While they're not your babysitter, they'll be invaluable in providing a sense of comfort and safety at all times.
- **Make copies of your travel documentation** and any other important documents you may need. This includes your passport and travel insurance information as well as the address of your closest embassy.
- **While staying in hotels, use the safe that's provided.** You can keep your valuables (such as electronics and travel documentation), locked up for safekeeping when you're not using them.
- **Never leave your belongings unattended** or put them in a place where they are not easily visible and you might forget them (such as on the back of a chair or in a bathroom perch). This is usually how things get lost and it's easily avoided.

The above are simply guidelines for staying safe – they're not intended to fill you with fear or anxiety. Your intuition has gotten you this far in life, so learn to trust it while you're traveling.







Have fun and enjoy the moment, just don't let your guard down. And that goes for anywhere in the world, not just South America.

## Book in Advance

If this is your very first solo female travel experience, you may want to consider booking some or all of your trips in advance. There are plenty of companies that offer itineraries tailored to solo female travelers looking for a more luxurious experience, regardless of how much they've traveled before or what their interests might be.

On these adventures, you set off on your own to travel through a pre-set schedule, with each experience catering to the needs and interests of women. They connect you with the places you visit in a deeper and more meaningful way while still maintaining comfort and security. You'll get all the adventure and immersive experiences you could possibly want, without having to worry about all the little details such as taking taxis, where to sleep and eat, and booking hikes and other tours.

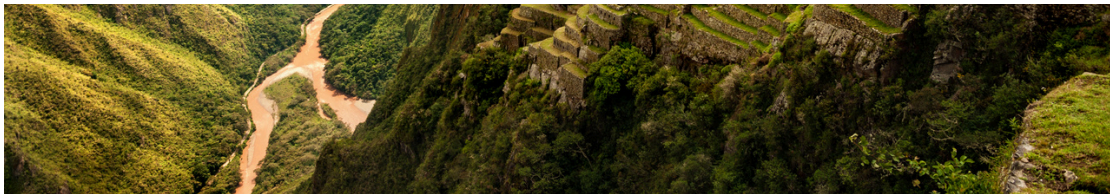
The key when going this route is booking with a reputable company. Kuoda is one of [South America's most recommended travel companies](#), and we specialize in luxury travel that takes care of all the details. We have bilingual guides that help you feel at home and taken care of, comfortable and safe transportation to and from your different destinations, flexible itineraries, and the most incredible accommodation and tour partners on the continent.



# Best Places to Solo Woman Travel in South America

With all of those details in mind, now it's time to figure out where you want to go. With so many options to suit every interest, this can be one of the most daunting tasks of planning a trip. But not to worry – Kuoda's travel experts have compiled this list of the best places to female travel solo in South America, with a few suggestions for each country.

# Peru



**M**ountains, jungle, beach, ancient and modern cityscapes. Peru has everything you could want in a destination and then some. But if your primary goal is to experience culture and history, there's no shortage here.

From the indigenous tribes that have lived in the Amazon jungle since well before the western world began to explore it, to the mysterious Nazca lines and pyramid-ridden cities along the Pacific coast and, of course, the ancestors of the Incas still living in the most remote parts of the Andes mountains... Peru is an ancient, sacred land.

Perhaps the most famous place to experience a piece of this history is [Machu Picchu](#), and one of the best ways to get there is to trek along the centuries-old Incan roads that still exist in their entirety to this day. You'll walk through breathtaking mountain vistas, isolated indigenous communities, and a green high jungle covered in native flora and fauna, all before arriving at one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world.

Culture and history aside, foodies will also have the time of their lives in Peru. This country has some of the best cuisines on the continent (if not the best).

[Peruvian food](#) is unique, flavorful, and regional. You can find delicious, local dishes in tiny, remote restaurants as easily as you can find world-class dining in one of the major cities of Lima, Cusco, or Arequipa. Indeed, Lima is not only the gastronomy capital of South America, but it's also one of the top food destinations in the entire world.

# Ecuador



**B**esides being the home of the equator, the reason most people visit Ecuador is for the nature. Specifically, some of the rarest nature in the world, all located on the [Galapagos Islands](#).

Just over 600 miles from the Ecuadorian coast, the Galapagos Islands were the inspiration for Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and they're a nature lovers' paradise. The isolated islands have allowed for the development of rare plant and animal species.

Approximately [97% of the reptiles and land mammals](#), [80% of the land birds](#), and [20% of the marine species here cannot be found anywhere else on the planet](#). Among these are giant tortoises, marine iguanas, and the most northerly penguins in the world – all of which you may spot as you snorkel the waters and walk the paradise beaches.

Something little known about the Galapagos is that the islands are actually a set of shield volcanoes and lava plateaus. These are some of the most volcanically active areas on the globe, as is all of Ecuador. If that sounds exciting, then Ecuador's [Avenue of the Volcanoes](#) may be the destination for you.

Travel through the spine of the Andes, across lush valleys, and between snow-topped mountains, as you visit eight of the most stunning volcanoes on the South American continent. You'll have a chance to take a dip in natural thermal springs, visit the Ecuadorian countryside, and spend some time in the colonial capital known as Quito.

# Colombia



**F**all in love with perfectly preserved colonial towns and the music and tradition that permeate Colombia's borders. These types of towns can be found across the country, with pieces even in the larger cities of Medellin and Bogota, our favorites are those in the coffee region.

Mostly located in the rural parts of the Paisa region, these towns are famous for their coffee production and tours, colorful architecture, and friendly locals. Salento, Filandia, and Armenia all have their fair share of each to offer, plus they're a great starting point for exploring the green Andes mountains.

From any of these towns, you can set off on a coffee tour, watch some of the most stunning mountain sunsets you've ever seen, or head out on day trips to the [hidden gems of Colombia](#). Among these are the Cocora Valley (home to the tallest palm trees in the world), Santa Rosa de Cabal (hot springs the likes of which you've never seen), and Los Nevados National Park (where you can spend hours without seeing the same bird twice).

For more colonial towns you can't get enough of, but a very different cultural experience, check out the [Caribbean coast of Colombia](#). Some of the warmest and most beautiful beaches on the continent can be found in Cartagena.

This port city was founded in the 16th century and the walled Old Town is listed as a [UNESCO World Heritage site](#). The tropical climate makes it a popular beach destination and the Caribbean heritage lends itself to great food and music. Head out via catamaran to the Rosario Islands, where white sand beaches and crystalline waters make for excellent snorkeling or watching the sunset with a cocktail.

# Chile



**L**ess than 300,000 square miles, Chile is one of the smallest landmasses in South America. It borders the Pacific Ocean in one long and narrow stretch, beginning with the Atacama Desert

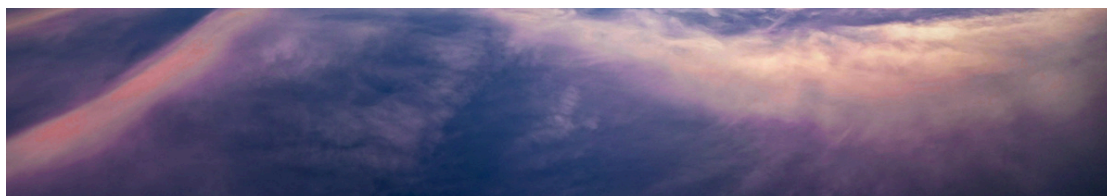
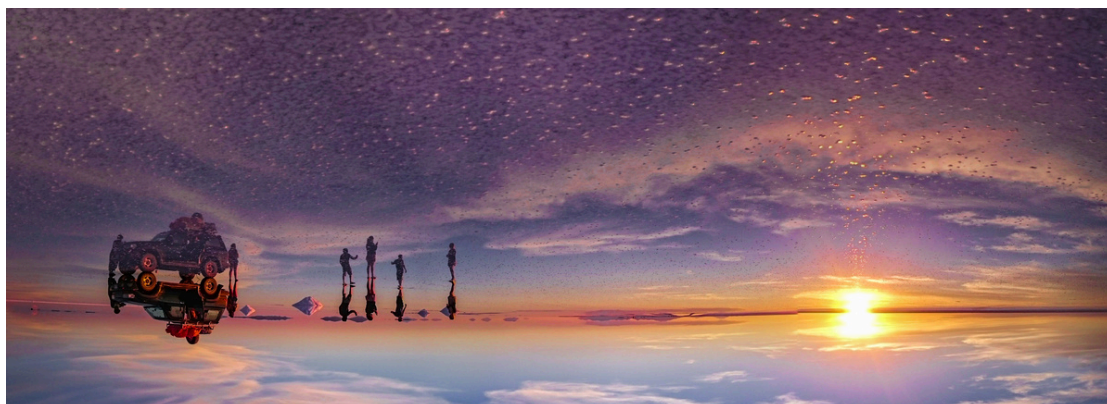
in the north and gradually becoming the rugged and remote lands of Chilean Patagonia in the far south. It's these two diverse landscapes that make our top two favorite destinations for female solo travel in Chile.

The [Atacama Desert](#) lies west of the Andes mountains and its seemingly barren landscape is actually a place of great beauty. Here you'll find altiplanic lagoons, enormous sand dunes, craters, canyons, and volcanoes that make you feel like you've stepped onto a whole other planet. [For women who love to hike, the unforgiving terrain brings rewards you can't find anywhere.](#) And for those that love the stars, you'll find some of the darkest skies in the world from which to view them.

[Chilean Patagonia](#) is where our trek-loving travelers head next. One of our most-loved tours in South America is that which takes you through Torres del Paine, arguably the most famous site in all of Chile's side of Patagonia.

The three granite towers are a positively dizzying site to see and getting there on foot holds even more iconic sites you'll never forget: crystal blue glaciers, golden grasslands, and wildlife that's endemic to these landscapes. At the end of the day, you'll retreat to the best accommodations this remote part of the world has to offer, where you can [enjoy some of the tastiest Chilean wines and all the fresh seafood you could possibly eat.](#)

# Bolivia



**B**olivia is the smallest landlocked country in South America, and much of its rich indigenous culture owes itself to this isolation. Bolivia is quickly becoming renowned for unique and otherworldly landscapes sandwiched between the Bolivian Andes mountains and the Amazon rainforest.

Two of our favorite spots take you outside of these regions, to the Uyuni salt flats and Lake Titicaca.

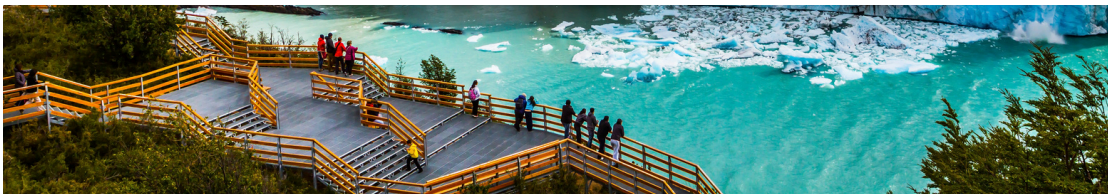
At 3,900 square miles, the [Uyuni salt flats](#), or Salar de Uyuni, are the largest salt flats in the world. They're all that's left of a prehistoric lake that went dry centuries ago. In the rainy season, the gleaming, reflective flats make it so you can't tell the difference between the ground and the sky. In the dry season, giant hexagonal formations make you feel like you've left earth entirely.

The best way to enjoy these flats and everything they have to offer is on a luxury tour where you'll stay at Kachi lodge. While most travelers here will only stay the day, staying at the lodge gives you the flats all to yourself every afternoon and night. Consisting of six glamping domes at the base of Tunupa volcano, there's nowhere cozier to take in this stunning place.

When you're ready to warm up after cool nights spent in front of a campfire in Uyuni, head to [Lake Titicaca](#). This is the highest navigable body of water in the world, one of South America's largest lakes, and the birthplace of Western civilization (according to ancient Incan legend).

That history can be found all along the lakes many islands, but especially on Isla del Sol (Island of the Sun) and Isla de la Luna (Island of the Moon). Between them, you'll find over 150 ancient settlements, plus beautiful places to stay while you enjoy the laid-back atmosphere.

# Argentina



**A**rgentina has distinct geography from north to south and east to west. Across this country you'll find thriving nightlife, delicious local cuisines, and a culture and history that's vastly different from its neighboring countries.

Argentina is like a little piece of Europe inside South America. That European heritage is especially reflected in the wine culture of the country. In Argentina, it's always wine o'clock.

The best place to sample grapes has to be Mendoza, one of the top [wine capitals of the world](#). Sitting at the foot of the Sierra de los Paramillos, Mendoza is famous for Malbecs, of course, but also many other varieties of red wines. Enjoy them all on wine tours and tastings that bring you to the countryside, where the only thing better than the wine are the stunning vistas, historic bodegas, and old-world plazas.

After drinking your fill of some of the best wines in the world, get a little taste of nature and adventure in [southern Argentina](#). Two of our top destinations are El Calafate and El Chalten.

The former is a quaint little town on the shores of Lago Argentino and serves as the gateway to the lake district, the Andes, and Patagonian glaciers that Argentina's side of Patagonia is most famous for. The latter is surrounded by lagoons, lakes, mountains, and glaciers. Though you'll never have to leave here [to see some of the most stunning landscapes in the country](#), you can also head out for climbing, camping, horseback riding, rafting, and nature excursions.





# Solo Woman Travel with Kuoda

Solo female travel is a trend that every independent and empowered female can get behind. And for the solo female traveler looking for a bit of everything, South America is the destination of choice.

Here you can find nature, ancient history, modern gastronomy, thriving nightlife, beaches, mountains, jungle, and everything in between. At Kuoda, we offer the best of all these experiences. [Begin your solo adventure](#) with one of our travel experts today.